

# Unseen

BY LEDYARD M. BAILEY

## Arvilla and Her Quest for Hidden Treasure.

FROM the time she wore freckles and pigtails, Arvilla had been a gambler. Not that she played poker, or bet on the ponies, or even bought oil stocks. She had only the vaguest idea of the difference between bridge and baccarat. All the same, Arvilla was a gambler.

At seven she gambled away her new slate with the red felt on the corners for an old brass locket that would not open. It was quite well understood that there was nothing much to be said for this locket, as a locket. What fascinated Arvilla was that it would not open, and therefore might contain hidden treasure. When at last her brother pried it open with his jack knife and revealed nothing more precious than a rather ratty-looking wisp of hair, Arvilla was disappointed but not cast down.

At nineteen she gambled away her maidenly estate and the safety and comfort of her father's house for an undersized traveling man whom she had met three times. Arvilla knew well enough that as an immediate husband he was not much to be desired, but she was simply certain that within his rather cheap and battered outer case there beat a heart of gold. Also, that she seemed inwardly to have powers which one day would make him a leader in the world of men and money.

Arvilla made a killing this time, so far at least as the heart of gold was concerned. It was really there, and for eight long years she held the only key to it. But she never succeeded in cashing in on any of the hidden powers. For that was only because they were so thoroughly hidden. She never admitted, even to herself, that they did not exist at all. When at last a railroad wreck snapped shut the cheap and battered outer case forever, Arvilla stopped thinking about hidden powers. She took the little key and, with the heart of gold had scribbled so patiently to carry, and the money which the railroad claim adjuster offered for the battered outer case, she bought a small brick building. It had two storerooms on the first floor and two apartments on the second. She rented one-half to a druggist, kept the other half for herself, and established a snug little millinery shop downstairs and a snug little home upstairs. And she was all through—she would gamble no more.

Her cure was short-lived. In tracing her husband's baggage, she learned that the railroad and express companies held at regular intervals auc-

### Settling an Argument.

BY RING LARDNER.

TO the editor: It seems like it was up to me to settle a big argument which has occurred between Mr. Manaux and Jack Kieran. It must be explained that Mr. Kieran is a base ball writer and a prominent golf player. Mr. Manaux is somewhat of a veteran big league baseball pitcher, and a prominent and formerly with Pittsburgh and Brooklyn, and easily the best singer in the big leagues. The argument was reported by Mr. H. H. Manaux of Detroit. Mr. Salsinger is a tall, skinny, handsome brunet, who looks not unlike the writer only he has more hair.

Well it seems like Mr. Manaux and Mr. Kieran got into a fishing argument, namely, Mr. Manaux claimed that if you took a bucket of water and weighed it and then dropped a live fish into the bucket, the bucket would weigh just the same. Mr. Kieran said that if you took a bucket of water and weighed it and then dropped a live fish into the bucket, the bucket would weigh more.

"A live fish can't possibly increase the weight of a bucket," said Mr. Manaux. "A dead fish, on the other hand, would make a test but he didn't have no live fish on hand that day and Mr. Manaux would not stand for no test being made with a dead fish. Finally they went to a fish market and they had a tub full of water there weighing 55 pounds and they found a fish named Curly who weighed three pounds and they put it in the tub and then weighed the total which weighed 57 pounds. Mr. Manaux claimed that clinched his argument because in the first place the carp was dead and in the second place he only increased the weight of the tub two pounds whereas the fish man admitted that his weight before being dropped into the tub was three pounds.

"That shows how right I am," said Mr. Manaux.

"No it doesn't," reported Mr. Kieran. "All it proves is that anybody with brains should ought to buy fish from this market."

Well friends the reason I feel called upon to horn in on this argument is that all my life I been making a study of weights and displacements and etc., and I will give you a few facts to prove that it is a very tricky subject and a person should not ought to get into no argument in regards to same unless they have mastered it.

If you will go into a restaurant and order a large glass of milk and weigh it before you touch it, you will find that the total weight is about one ounce. Then if you will wait a few moments till a fly drops into the glass and weigh it again, why if the fly is just a common fly and still alive you will find that the weight of the entire project has increased even one fly weight, but if the fly was dead when it dropped in, why they will be a increased weight of 10 and no hundreds minims. On the other hand if you take a pail of water or beer and drop a live rat into same, the weight of the pail will increase by exactly as much as the rat weighed in the first place and if you make it two rats, the weight will increase two rats. But if rats both of the rats happens to get drowned, they will come to the surface and then the weight of the pail at the same time proving that they didn't weigh nothing or they would of sank. It is kind of dangerous to make this sort of a test, for the rats goes right to it and are liable to reach the singing stage.

The most conclusive test I ever made alone the Hudson River, when I took a night boat from New York to Albany on the Hudson River. First it was necessary to weigh the passengers and the boat when it was empty and afterwards when all the passengers got aboard. Then I made all the passengers come out of the weighing room and get weighed one by one. When the boat got to Albany the next morning the river looked just like it did the last time I was up there.

Prof. Sump of Severe University, New Hampshire, once made a experiment for which he was awarded more than the foregoing. He weighed all the passengers that was going on a trip from New York to Cherbourg and then weighed them all again when the ship got to Cherbourg. They didn't weigh nowhere near as much. Prof. Sump was much impressed.

tion sales of unclaimed baggage and express. Henceforward no sale was complete without her presence.

SEAFARING men tell us that a derelict is easy to deal with so long as it floats in plain sight. It may be seen and avoided, or blown up and safely sunk. But when it becomes submerged and invisible—when all trace of it is lost, lurking just below the surface—then it becomes a menace and a horror to all who sail the seas.

Something like this had happened to a derelict son of the house of Littleton. At least the telegram sounded like it. A long message it was, fast day rate, signed by a firm of New York lawyers who never known to look at a retainer of less than five figures. Crickmay read it slowly, leaning back in his swivel chair on a sunny morning of late October.

"We should be obliged if you would report the derelict's present whereabouts and condition of Donald Littleton. Left here six months ago. Have traced movements to June thirteenth, buying ticket for your city. Had in his possession considerable amount high-grade bonds secured in irregular manner. So far as we have been able to learn has made no attempt to dispose of same, but possession of securities subjects him to danger of robbery or swindling operations. Fond of associating with questionable characters. Our clients insist upon importance of avoiding all publicity. Forwarding full particulars by mail. Please acknowledge by telegraph."

After a few minutes' communion with an English briar Crickmay summoned from his lair a long, pale, sandy-haired and harmless-looking young man. "Henry," Crickmay ordered, "I want you to find this man." He pushed a slip of paper across his big, littered desk to the boy. "He's the derelict you're talking about. I don't want to see him, you understand, not yet, at least. But I want to know where he is, and what he's doing, and what he has been doing, what money he owes, and what devil he has been up to, if any. And no noise about it. Henry, not a rustle in the grass. Understand?"

Henry read the name and the date, "June thirteenth," he said slowly. "Lots of things have happened since then."

ON the morning of the fourth day, when Crickmay breezed into his office, Henry was waiting for him. "Lots of things happened, like I told you," he reported. "He landed here June fifteenth and put up at that Greek deadfall down at the station, took the little key and the money of the old gang right away, or they nosed him out, maybe. He didn't show any money to amount to anything, but had only one suit case for baggage."

Crickmay made a memorandum in his small running script. "They kept him busy for a few days, trying three or four of the old games on him, trying to get him to loosen up. They smelled money on him, but they couldn't find it. Then they let him win a little stake. They figured that would get him excited and he would produce some real money. Instead, he throws them down, drives up to the Napoleon in a five-dollar-an-hour car, registers in his own name and gets himself all dressed up like a harness horse."

Well, that couldn't last long. The gang laid off him while he was in town, but they kept close track of him, watching all the time for his money to show up. It didn't show up. After a few days at the hotel, with all the mob parties and cafe bills, he struck bottom. Then he went the rounds of the big mining offices, making a big name for himself, and he was everywhere he could on the strength of his name. That way he picked up a little stake again, and the gang decided it was no use waiting any longer. They pulled him under one night and cleaned him, trying to break even, anyway. I figure they quit losers, at that. But they finished the job, and plenty. Probably gave him too strong a dose of dose. Anyway, he woke up next day so badly shot to pieces and being made by the gang, that they ran him up to the Junction in a car, and unt on the Overland at two in the morning, with a ticket to Reno. Next day the train men took him off at Reno and sent him to a sanatorium there. That's where he is now, using the name the gang put on his ticket. The Jackal had finished his story; a sordid story, but all too common.

"Did you find any baggage or valuable of any kind?" asked Crickmay.

"His suit case and some new clothes are at the Napoleon, held for his last bill. Nothing of much value, the clerk says. 'Nothing in the safe'."

"No," said Henry. "Like I told you, he never showed up any real money, this time. Here's the telegram from Reno," he concluded. Crickmay read it over. "Partly rational, but not yet fit to be trusted. He may feel sure of getting paid, or they wouldn't be so keen on holding him. However, that's all right; he's better off there than anywhere else."

He said nothing about the missing securities. If Henry had found them, he would have said so. Arvilla, it was probable, he knew nothing of them, what he didn't know wouldn't hurt him.

CRICKMAY spent a few minutes studying the "full particulars by mail" which had arrived that morning. The derelict had carried off with him a bundle of gilt-edged bonds of the face value of \$150,000. And the queer thing about it was that in a way they belonged to him. That is, they were part of his share of his father's estate, left in trust, however, until he should reach years of discretion, which his father, after many bitter disappointments, had fixed at 40. He was now well past 30, and it seemed likely that his father had been dead for some time. Crickmay had been a shrewd trick, to get his hands on these securities for a moment, and had promptly disappeared. The family, shrinking from scandal, had not appealed to the police, and to do them justice, seemed more concerned over the dangers to which the man himself was liable than over the loss of the money.

When Crickmay walked into the clubbing room of the hotel, he was out of the table where the general passenger agent sat.

"Dave," he said, "I want to ask you a hypothetical question."

"Nothing doing," said the G. P. A.

"I've heard you ask those hypo questions of yours in court, and somebody always gets in trouble over them. Any questions you want to ask me, you ask them straight and no frills."

Crickmay grinned over the remark. "Glad to find you so agreeable today, Dave," he chuckled. "That 'Courtney First' circular of yours must have struck in on you."

"Suppose checked a trunk at Cheyenne last June, got into some trouble here, and dropped out of sight, leaving my trunk in your bag-

gage room. How do my heirs and assigns get hold of it?"

"They don't," growled the G. P. A. "We sold it for storage charges long ago."

The G. P. A. did not waste politeness on men he liked, and he liked Crickmay.

"Got a description of the trunk?" he asked, "marks or anything to identify it?"

Crickmay quoted what little the full particulars had contained.

The G. P. A. grunted again. "Probably a half a dozen like it," he said. "But we are supposed to keep a record of the stuff sold and the purchasers' addresses. Half the time they lie about it, second-hand dealers mostly. I'll telephone Grant and have him send his record up to your office, and you see what you can dig out of it."

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SHORTLY after 5 o'clock that afternoon Crickmay tried the door of Arvilla's millinery shop. It was locked, quite conclusively so. And there was no response to his knocks, nor to his punching of the bell, and a bunch of door keys in her hand. A big Maltese cat strolled from the dim rear of the shop and stared at him sideways through the doorway. Arvilla, but did not offer to open up. The youth at the drug store soda fountain next door had warned him not to enter under it. He knew less than Crickmay did concerning Arvilla's whereabouts.

According to the station agent's vision of the things she would do when the hidden treasure was found. Now she was bewildered in the array of them, hesitating to choose which should be the first to come true up stairs. At ten o'clock she tied up the room, laid the photograph case away in the bottom drawer of her dresser, closed the trunk, piled the salvaged clothing neatly, ready for the second-hand man in the morning, and went to bed. She did not sleep, but hid under her eyes saw nothing in the room.

For three days she went about her accustomed concerns with careful attention. She scolded her assistants in the shop, she flattered the contractor's fat wife into buying a fifty-dollar hat, she wrangled with the traveling salesman about the quality of his goods, she chased of trimmings, and she drove a thrifty bargain with the second-hand man for the salvaged clothing. And all this time she was not really there at all.

For three nights she slept little, circling in the air, viewing all the kingdoms of the earth, the kingdoms thereof, trying to choose between them. She decided at last upon Rio de Janeiro. She had read all about Rio in a magazine, and dreamed her dreams of it long ago, and in the trunk had been a steamship prospectus full of glittering words, and she had been so long on feast upon beauty and romance and utter strangeness.

On the fourth afternoon, when she put away some clean clothes, she came upon the photograph case and opened it again. She set it up on her dresser, carefully, and finished arranging the clothes in the drawer.

That night she slept, at first, then woke and lay open-eyed. And then, quite suddenly, without any warning whatever, Arvilla crashed her forehead against something as rock-ribbed and ancient as any hill—her own primitive, inbred, rugged honesty. She sat up in her bed, and a little hat that she had bought for a party, fell to the floor. This honesty was not hers.

CRICKMAY drove back to his office, feeling low in his mind. His stenographer had gone home, but a few minutes' rest, and he was back in the reception room. She rose as he came in, a woman of thirty, trimly turned out, her hair suitably styled, a little hat that she had bought for a party, fell to the floor. This honesty was not hers.

"This is Mr. Crickmay," she asked, and as he assented, rather at a loss how to place her. She went on: "Can you tell me a few minutes, on an important matter? My husband used to tell me that if ever I had any important business I must consult you. He had seen you in court two or three times when he was drawn on the jury. He always said you were the ablest lawyer there."

Crickmay sighed. He knew what this sort of introduction foreshadowed, some petty snarl in the affairs of a helpless woman, which would take a lot of valuable time and bring him neither cash nor credit. But he invited the woman into his office and asked her to be seated. Her eyes were clear and intelligent, and she carried herself steadily, whatever her worries.

She wasted no more time in introductions. "My name is Arvilla Carter," she said. "Five days ago I bought a trunk at a sale of unclaimed baggage."

Crickmay snapped to attention in his chair. "A railroad agent gave me a receipt for the money I paid. As I understand it, I have a legal right to the trunk and its contents." She waited a moment. Crickmay told him his way cautiously—rather a joke that he should be called upon to prove a woman's right to the bonds he was looking for. "Ordinarily," he answered slowly. "Go on, please."

"Ordinarily," agreed the woman; "but this is out of the ordinary, or I should not be taking your time. I found some valuable papers in the trunk, and I don't know what to do with them. I feel that I can keep them. It would not be honest. I want you to help me find the person to whom they belong. I am able to pay you for your trouble."

This was simply too good to be true.

post vaults closed at five. She scrambled to her feet, stuffed the bonds into her handbag and snatched her hat and coat. The thought of her last purchase car at the corner, she would just make it. The girls in the shop could be depended on to lock up. Arvilla ran for the corner.

It was almost six o'clock when she came home again, walking sedately, the key to the safe deposit box in her bag in place of the bonds. She had staidied now and was beginning to plan. It would not do to make any sudden change in her way of living that might attract attention.

The girls had locked up the shop and gone home—about time, as usual, they lie about it, second-hand dealers mostly. I'll telephone Grant and have him send his record up to your office, and you see what you can dig out of it."

There is this to be said for the gambling instinct, it certainly stimulates the imagination. All her life Arvilla had dreamed dreams and seen visions of the things she would do when the hidden treasure was found. Now she was bewildered in the array of them, hesitating to choose which should be the first to come true up stairs.

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"WE DID NOT TALK ABOUT IT UNTIL WE HAD LEFT THE CAR."

"Where are these papers?" Crickmay asked.

"In my safe deposit box," said Arvilla.

Crickmay drew a deep breath and smiled. This woman had both character and intelligence. She knew what she was about. He decided on the instant to lay his cards on the table.

"A hundred and fifty thousand dollars in gilt-edged railroad bonds," he said. Arvilla jumped, stared, flushed, and went pale.

"You know all about it," she cried, and shrunk back in her chair. "Have I done wrong then, after all?" Crickmay rose and held out his hand.

"On the contrary," he said, "you have done the right thing. It is possible. Will you shake hands?" Arvilla shook hands, and smiled uncertainly, still pale. "I didn't mean to tell you my part of the story," she said. "I can see that you couldn't, but I am deeply grateful to you for not trying. Let me tell you my part of the story."

He read to her the telegram, the memorandum of Henry's report, and part of the full particulars from New York.

Arvilla listened with intent, earnest eyes fixed on his face. She was thinking of the right thing to say. She was thinking of the right thing to say.

"What do you advise me to do?" she asked, when the reading was finished.

"I am hardly in a position to advise you professionally," said Crickmay. "I represent the other side of the matter, you know. But, with your permission, I will telegraph to New York and lay the facts before my principals, with my recommendations. I believe they will do the right thing. I will telephone you as soon as I have their answer."

"I am quite satisfied to leave the matter in your hands," said Arvilla. "So far as I am concerned, but what about poor boy at Reno, sick and alone among strangers?"

Crickmay smiled at her. How like a woman to put it that way. "Hardly a boy," said he, "thirty-four, according to the record, you know. He seems to be in safe hands, at least. I think we may rely upon his family to see that he is properly cared for."

Arvilla did not think so, but she said nothing more about it. She had been giving him this far, but she was not to be deceived. She took her leave now, and Crickmay shook hands with her. She was really too good to be true, but he found it impossible to doubt her.

ARVILLA went steadily about her farmed concerns and made ready for bed earlier than usual. Before she put out her light she took up the photographs. "He said I had done the 'rightest thing possible,'" she murmured. "I wonder if I did. That poor boy of yours will not get the money that belongs to him, after

"All my life I have expected to find hidden treasure that had belonged to some one else. I have found it now, and it is really mine, my very own."

"Please forgive me for writing such a long letter, but I felt I must tell you all about it. I will mail this at Panama tomorrow."

"Good-by, my friend. 'Arvilla Carter Littleton.'"

Arvilla lifted her eyes from the message. They were very bright. It was a pleasant message to read. But she spoke soberly.

"Fifteen thousand dollars!" she said. "That is a good deal of money. Do you think I ought to take it?" Crickmay smiled and pushed the certified check across his desk. "Of course you may take it. It is yours. It's worth every cent of it to them, and to me."

Arvilla sighed and took the bonds from her bag, waiting quietly while Crickmay checked them over and signed a receipt for them. She took the check and receipt to her room, and stood up.

"Thank you," she said simply. "That's all, so far as I am concerned, it is not."

Crickmay came from behind his desk and walked to the door with her. "May I say," he asked, "that it has done me good to know you, and to be honored by your confidence? I hope you will look upon me as a friend."

"Thank you," said Arvilla again. "That day and the next she had an unusual amount of business to attend to. At 5 o'clock on the second afternoon she drove to the station in a taxi and took a west-bound train. The first of her two trunks had a new lock.

ON Board S. S. Two Americas. "Dear Mr. Crickmay, I have made up my mind that it is right to tell you all about it. You must do as you think best about notifying the family in New York. I could not bring myself to write to them direct."

"When I arrived in Reno I took a room in a hotel, and drove out to the sanatorium. I told the doctor in charge that I was a friend of the family. I was, too, at least so far, though I supposed he was a very small percentage of the population exercised the privilege of voting. This was a new thing for the women voters, due, no doubt, to the long-established habit of taking no active interest in affairs of state."

MISS SHERWIN is a Cleveland, Ohio, woman. She finished at Wellesley College and later studied at Oxford, England. For six years she was instructor in history in New England schools, and has been for some time past a trustee of Wellesley College. Her natural desire to be of service led her into various associations for the welfare of women and children, and she gradually acquired so many responsibilities in this work that she was compelled to discontinue her teaching in order that she might give her entire time to social service.

She is director of the Association for Criminal Justice in Cleveland, member of the National League of Women Voters, and a member of the Consumers' League, Visiting Nurses' Association and Women's Committee of National Defense.

During her incumbency as vice president of the League of Women Voters Miss Sherwin toured the country, lecturing on the importance of the league's platform. The theories on efficiency in government won her wide recognition as a person of constructive thinking.

The league has outlined three definite tasks as the program for the present administration. They are: To urge efficiency in government by means of the merit system as the basis of appointment to office and promotion in office; to urge governmental responsibility for the welfare of women and children, and to co-operate for the prevention of war, advocating a policy of participation in international conferences.

Asked if she believed in affiliation with the type of club whose members have been called "bug hunters," she smiled and said: "I am interested in the study of poetry or story-writing or painting. Miss Sherwin looked up with a surprised smile and said:

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